

Group I Claims 1-23 drawn to a fluid sampling apparatus; and

Group II Claim 24 drawn to a method of sampling a fluid.

Applicants believe there would be a great economy of cost and effort on the part of the Office, and certainly to the applicants, if the closely related subject matter of Groups I - II claims were examined together in this one application. Applicants maintain the subject matter of Groups I - II define, but one invention, and do not possess sufficient differences to warrant issuance of separate patents.

In the event the requirement is adhered to, applicants provisionally elect with traverse, the invention of Group I, for further examination on the merits.

In accordance with Office guidelines recited in MPEP Section 821.04, elected apparatus claims found to recite patentable subject matter may be rejoined with the provisionally withdrawn method of use claims and examined in this one application provided the method of use recite limitations corresponding to those found to be patentable during examination of the elected invention. As such, when the claims 1-23, drawn to a fluid sampling apparatus are found to recite patentable subject matter, non-elected claim 24 should be taken up for examination.

In the event that any issues remain, Examiner Siefke is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (919) 419-9350 to resolve same.

Respectfully submitted,



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